1:Marshall E-5 (1952-1953) 1959 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

584 Boys are always considerably older than girls before their parents betroth them.
[805] We never knew the precise age of a /Kung because they reckon time from one season to the next, not in years, and do not keep track of a person's age by any measurement. Boys appear to be usually around twelve to fourteen or fifteen before they are
[868] betrothed. At this age their fathers begin to take them on the long hard hunts for the
[883] big animals which supply the people's meat and begin their serious hunting training.

As to girls, wives are in such demand in this polygynous society that the parents of boys have their eyes upon every girl baby and may say to the parents of an unborn infant, ' If it is a girl, let us have her for our son.' It seems to be more usual, however, to betroth the girls when they are about two to five or six. The boys wait patiently for long years for their fiancées to grow up.

We wondered what would happen if, when the time at last came for the marriage, the boy or girl should refuse the parents' choice. It appears that they seldom do. A boy is usually too eager to get a wife. To refuse the betrothed might mean he would have to wait for years and years again for a girl baby to grow up. The girls are usually too young to protest but it sometimes happens that one does. /Kung
593 parents are exceedingly protective and permissive with their children, and delight
855 in them, especially in their infancy. I have sometimes seen an older child scolded or
861 snapped at by an impatient mother but I never saw a child severely punished. No hard work and few, if any, regular chores are demanded of dependent children. The same protectiveness and permissiveness were apparent in parents' lenience with respect to their girls' betrothals. They complied with the girls' wishes.

The marriage may take place when the parents agree. The age of the young people
582 varies greatly. For the girl, there are no definite age or other requirements. The girl need not, for instance, show physical signs of maturity. When the important Ceremony of First Menstruation is performed, the girl may have been married for years. Bau, who was married to Tsamgao in 1951, did not have her first child for six years. /Nai was married to /Gunda in May 1953. She menstruated for the first time in March 1959. To be married as young as that is not at all unusual, but we have known several girls to be somewhat older.

The parents explain that when the girls marry young they ' get used to ' their
582 husbands. I am sure there is a great deal in this and I am sure it strongly affects the
593 relations of husbands and wives, but I had insufficient opportunity to observe eight- or nine-year-old brides with teen-age husbands, and insufficient means, through interpreters, to grasp the nature of their relationship. What is the young husband like to a girl child? The friendly, gentle old man, Demi, said to me, ' They enjoy their youth together .'

593 The young couples are expected not to have sexual intercourse till the girls are ' big
834 enough ', informants said, and the boys must not force the girls. If a girl complained to her parents and the parents took her back and sent the young husband away, he might have to wait for years again for another bride to grow up. The /Kung are
[123] prevented by their incest taboos and their modesty from speaking freely about sex and I learned nothing about the actual sexual practices of the young couples. /Nai and her young husband, /Gunda, had only one good kaross between them; they slept
513 together bundled in it, feet to feet. Bau and Tsamgao slept quite apart—at different
593 fires—when we observed them in 1952. In 1953 they slept at their own fire, apart, she

[24 cont.]
000 they had never seen any. A certain dry humor spiced their con-
522 versation. I once said to a Bushman: "If you tell me this, you
161 will get whatever you want." He answered: "Good, I shall speak
157 and you will give me your automobile." Their imagination is
123 very poor; in this respect they are much too accurate as observers
of nature. Once a young Bushman woman with two children came
to me and wanted to buy some sugar. I said to her: "I won't sell
you anything, but you will get the sugar if you tell me some
children's stories, for example, about animals." After some hesi-
[530] tation she began the story of Arri, the guinea hen. It was no
fairy tale, but a detailed account concerning this important food
bird. She even imitated the calls of the guinea hen, "for exam-
ple, when someone comes and there is danger, then they say,
'gannana he gannana he,' but when they are alone and enjoying
themselves, then they go 'gi gi gi.'" The children had to imi-
[861] tate this until they were able to mimic the sound accurately.
Then it was the turn of the sand hen, which says, "gi ganna gi
ganna"; then the ostrich, which goes, "hmm, hmm, hmm"; then
the gum bird [Harzvogel], which says, "hai-dschi, hai-dschi,"
and the owl, "mhm, m."

3. Posture, Movement, Stamina

516 As a result of his marked lordosis, the Bushman never as-
sumes a posture that would conform to our military ideal; he
almost always stands with his stomach somewhat protruding.

481 The way the Bushmen run is very peculiar and would
justify detailed study. [25] The run is really a continuous fast
walk, in which the legs are kicked forward, but the lower thighs
are never brought back high, as is the case with our runners. The
body is held as straight as possible, and the head up, not forward (1).

[113] 1. E. v. Eickstedt (Rassenkunde und Rassengeschichte der Menschheit [Ethnology and History of Mankind], p. 556) states: "The foot is put in a peculiar transverse position, which makes the track in the sand easily

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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to go, he began to cry, saying: "Father, Father," and when Lazy Kwi hesitated a moment, then said he was going anyway, the little boy picked up a handful of stones and threw one at him. This amused Lazy Kwi's wife, who smiled and tried halfheartedly to take the stones away, but it angered Lazy Kwi, who caught his son by the arm and boxed his ears. That made the little boy so furious that he had a tantrum; he screamed and cried and arched his back to draw away from his mother, who tried to pick him up, both mother and child doing exactly what they had done when the little boy was a baby and no doubt had been doing ever since. His mother always did have a terrible time managing him, and he was still nursing although he was now five or six years old. Before his father left, his mother had managed to mollify him somewhat, and she sat on the ground, letting him sit on her leg to nurse. He drank from one breast and held the other in his hand as he glared over his mother's shoulder at his father, who was already in the jeep.

We drove all afternoon, going fast because the ground was hard and not too bumpy, and the plains of Nyae Nyae seemed even longer, even wider than the plains of Ai a ha'o, being more slanted. We saw the Aha Mountains, a series of large rock outcrops quite separate from each other, blunt-ended like drumlins, which the Bushmen call "The Knife's Back." They appeared on the horizon shortly after we left Nama, distant and blue over the yellow veld, so surprising to see in that flat country that we stopped to look at them. They seemed so misty and far, so infinitely alluring, that we longed to go there. When we drove on, they stayed as relatively fixed as the moon would, which showed how far away they were. Lazy Kwi said that once on a clear day he had seen them from the top of the Gautscha baobab.

We reached the waterhole at the end of the afternoon, a

513 882 together may sleep near the parents of one of them, but not exactly at the parents' fire.

855 857 Within the frame of protectiveness the parents are very permissive and make few, if any, demands on their children. With no houses and few utensils, there are not many household tasks to assign. Children are not sent off alone to do any of the daily work of fetching water or wood or [136] gathering veldkos. Although lions, leopards, and hyenas tend to mind their own business, they are present in the country and share the water holes with the Bushmen. Poisonous snakes are a very real danger. Furthermore, as the hunters say, it takes a lifetime to learn the country well enough not to be easily lost in the featureless grass and brush. The adults do not let their children out of their sight. In their parents' presence the children imitate adult activities in vital, active play, very engaging to watch, and [868] participate in actual work as they are able. The adults pause to show them how to hold a digging stick, or a toy bow or drill, so that play and learning merge.

524 857 [512] The !Kung have a rich variety of lively group games, with pantomime, singing, dancing, and other rhythmic movements, that children and adults together enjoy playing in the werf when the heat of the day is over. In most of their games boys and girls play separately, but they dance and sing together.

861 !Kung children are never harshly punished. One father said that if he had a boy who was quarrelsome or who disobeyed the rules—for instance, the absolute rule of the !Kung against stealing food or possessions—what he would do about it would be to keep the boy right with him until he learned sense. The children on their part do not often do things that call forth 857 156 punishment. They usually fall in with group life and do what is expected of them without apparent uncertainty, frustration, or fear; and expressions of resistance or hostility toward their parents, the group, or each other are very much the exception.

881 [173] [171] [562] [535] [534] [502] [304] PUBERTY • When the fathers of the present old men were young men, the Nyae Nyae !Kung adopted the ceremony of the *Choma*, which they said was taught to them by a !Kung man who had married into another language group in the south. The *Choma* resembles some Bantu initiation ceremonies at certain points. The men who have had the ceremony and are therefore *Choma* owners take the boys to a place far enough from the werf to be out of hearing of the women, who, the !Kung claim, would die if they heard some of the *Choma* sounds. The men and boys dance all night for several nights to special *Choma* songs with special rhythms that differ from those of the other dances. A secret bull-roarer plays a part in the ceremony. At the end the boys are scarified with a vertical line down the middle of their foreheads and are given a special *Choma* haircut. Circumcision or other genital operations are not practiced by the !Kung.